

Arlington Conservation Commission
Minutes
April 3, 2014

Mr. Stevens called the meeting to order at 7:45 p.m. in the second floor conference room of the Town Hall Annex. Present were Nathaniel Stevens, Charles Tirone, Catherine Garnett, Eileen Coleman, Curt Connors, Michelle Durocher and David White of the Commission. Corinna Beckwith, Commission Administrator, was absent. Also present were Andrea Kendall, Marie Conlon, Kelly Lenos, Gary Gryan, Janine White, Susan Chapnick, Jane Howard, Brad Barber, Lawrence Rogovin, Bruce Wheltle and Susan Stamps.

7:45pm – Commission Business:

Mr. White reported that **Ecofest** on March 29 at Town Hall was a record turnout. Mr. White and Ms. Coleman from the Commission staffed a table in conjunction with other community groups. One project proposal emerged from discussions at Ecofest, a nature poetry project called the Mt. Gilboa Kiosk Haiku Project. A project description was distributed to the Commission by Mr. White. The project seeks to foster community appreciation and stewardship for the land and will make use of an under-utilized kiosk already in existence at the entrance to the conservation land. The Commission agreed to endorse it.

Meeting **minutes** from three recent meetings were voted unanimously and approved: Mr. Connors moved to approve the minutes for the 3/27 meeting; Ms. Garnett seconded. Mr. Connors moved to approve the minutes for the 3/20 meeting; Mr. White seconded. Mr. Connors moved to approve the minutes for the 3/6 minutes; Ms. Garnett seconded.

Cathy reported on a follow-up discussion with Carol Johnson regarding the work being planned for **Spy Pond Park**. Ms. Johnson has a preference for core rolls for effective erosion control and will incorporate their use into the plan she will be providing. Plantings will be provided by volunteers from Friends of Spy Pond Park. Once a plan is in hand, Mr. Stevens recommended that we involve Leslie Mayer and the Parks & Recreation Commission.

8:00pm – **Discussion** – (cont'd hearing) Proposed development of Busa Farm adjacent to Reservoir

The Commission continued its discussion of a planned letter to Lexington regarding issues related to the Reservoir. Commissioners were in agreement to urge Lexington not to reduce any of the plantings in the vegetated buffer between the farm fields and the Reservoir path. Another issue of importance is ensuring that no additional stormwater will discharge into the Reservoir in conjunction with the Busa Farm development. The Commission agreed that the letter should be completed as quickly as possible so that these issues can be considered as part of the planning underway now for the project and being voted on by Lexington Town Meeting.

8:15pm – Request for Determination of Applicability – Boston Gas Company

Andrea Kendall from LLC presented a plan for a gas line maintenance project. This project does fit within the state wetlands protection act exemption for public utilities; however, this project is subject to our jurisdiction under town bylaws.

National Grid is proposing to replace a 2-, 3-, and 4-inch gas lines with a 6-inch gas line. The work on Mill St. will be completed within the roadway. The project will be occurring within the area of Mill Brook, which runs underneath the roadway. The catch basins will be protected and erosion control measures will be taken. The road will be trenched so that the pipe will be 3 feet deep. The work will be conducted within 100 foot segments at a time, with the intent to fill the work area at the end of each day. The work is intended to take 2-3 weeks. The old gas line will be abandoned in place and not extracted.

Mr. Tirone asked what would happen with the materials dug from the project. It will likely not be reused to backfill the trench. Mr. Tirone inquired about erosion controls.

Mr. Connors requested that the refueling zone could be expanded to the 200 ft, river front zone.

Ms. Chapnick inquired whether the excavated soils could be deposited directly into a truck rather than deposited as a pile.

Ms. Garnett inquired whether the work could be conducted as far as possible from a large Sycamore Maple, a historic tree in front of the medical office building at 22 Mill St.

The zone of work on Edith Street is adjacent to a wetland area. Ms. Kendall identified the area of erosion control and catch basin protection. The pipeline area is 544 feet, anticipated to be about 1.5 weeks of work. The new pipe in this area will also be a 6-inch pipe installed within a 1.5-wide foot trench.

Upon opening up the hearing to questions from the audience, Ms. White inquired whether the project would include replacement of service lines to all adjacent homes. That is not specifically indicated in the project plan. This is a topic that will need to be clarified so that the Commission can consider whether this will create other impacts.

Citizens attending the hearing asked whether access to homes would be impeded, and whether there were planned restrictions on street parking, which is heavily used by commuters. Another citizen asked which days of the week the work would be conducted. Ms. Kendall thought the project would be a M-F project.

Mr. Connors moved to approve the application with a positive determination of jurisdiction but no filing of Notice of Intent required. Mr. Tirone seconded. Conditions added by the Commission are: 1) silt socks to be used instead of hay bales for erosion control on Edith St.; 2) silt sacks to be used in the catch basins; and 3) refueling zone to

be expanded to the 200 ft, Riverfront Area. The motion passed unanimously.

8:45pm Request for Determination of Applicability – Spy Pond pathway (along Route 2)

Brad Barber, chair of the Spy Pond Committee, and a volunteer from the Appalachian Mountain Club, Stroker Rogovin, presented to the Commission on the trail maintenance project that is being proposed as remediation for a badly eroded area on the bank of Spy Pond. The work is planned for May 17 during the annual Spy Pond Trails Day, sponsored by the Spy Pond Environment Task Group. Materials being used for the project are repurposed curbing from the Symmes site and all labor will be donated.

The project is within the buffer zone of the pond. Mr. Tirone moved to approve the application with a positive determination of jurisdiction but no filing of Notice of Intent required. Mr. Connors seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**9:00pm – Abbreviated Notice of Resource Area Determination – (cont'd hearing) Lot E
Dothan Rd**

The applicant has requested that the hearing be continued. Mr. White motioned to continue the hearing to 8:15 pm on the April 17th meeting; Ms. Garnett seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The applicants are sending a check for the peer review contract.

Commission Business, cont.

Susan Stamps addressed the Commission on Warrant Article 22 related to the **Community Preservation Act**. Although the Commission has already voted to endorse the warrant article, Mr. Stevens encouraged Ms. Stamps to provide the commission with detailed information on the Article and to answer questions.

Surcharge on the property tax from the CPA can be voted up to 3%, but the suggestion for Arlington is to put forward as a 1.5% surcharge to be voted by Arlington citizens if the article passes Town Meeting. There are a number of exemptions being proposed to the surcharge: 1) the first \$100K of assessed value would be exempt; 2) low income homeowners would be exempt; and 3) low and moderate-income seniors would be exempt. In all cases, eligible citizens would need to apply for the exemption rather than their being automatic.

If the CPA is adopted in Arlington, Town Meeting would vote the CPA appropriations just like all other town appropriations. The projects receiving CPA funding would be approved by the Community Preservation Committee, defined by the statute as up to 9 members including at least one member each from the Historical Commission, the Conservation Commission, the Parks & Recreation Commission, the Housing Authority, and the Planning Department.

Mr. White and Mr. Tirone reported on a meeting that they attended on the **ACROSS**

Lexington initiative. Mr. Tirone took the opportunity to request additional assistance to pay for the water chestnut harvesting at the Reservoir, either in the form of off-loading the chestnuts for disposal or as a contribution toward the cost of the harvesting, which Arlington conducts at significant expense. He asked the Lexington group to advocate with their town officials to support a share of this invasive clean-up; last year, the Lexington Conservation Commission voted to approve sharing expenses but the Lexington Selectmen did not approve it.

The Commission brainstormed ideas for what additional steps we could take to be more successful in obtaining a contribution from Lexington to participate in the maintenance of the Reservoir, which is largely in Lexington and is enjoyed by Lexington residents. One idea was to ask the Arlington Selectmen to relay the request to the Lexington Selectmen directly; thereby building bridges between the executive bodies of the two towns. Mr. Stevens will draft a letter to the Arlington Board of Selectmen to highlight the need for cooperation between both communities and to highlight Arlington's concessions to Lexington interests which have not been reciprocated in equal measure by Lexington.

The annual Spring **clean-up of Meadowbrook Park** is scheduled for April 12 from 9 am to Noon.

Meeting adjourned at 10:25pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Michelle Durocher
Commission Associate member